



GEORGIA DISTRICT OFFICE *NEWS RELEASE*

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RCF Seals & Couplings Uses SBA Programs To Expand Business to Foreign Customers *--Exports Make Up 40 Percent of RCF Revenues--*

VIDALIA, Ga. – RCF Seals & Couplings Inc. is proof that you don't have to be based in a big city to export your products all over the world. Headquartered in this small south Georgia town, RCF designs and manufactures high temperature seals and gaskets for high performance aircraft. It sells these products, including specialty ducting, to customers in a number of foreign countries.

"Exporting to Europe and Asia has long been a part of RCF's business strategy," says Dianne Zimnavoda, President. "To date, we have customers in France, Ireland, England, Germany, Italy, Taiwan and Japan."

Mrs. Zimnavoda explained that some of her company's products go to Canada where Lear Jet makes the wings for its "Lear 45" aircraft. The plane's fuselage is assembled in Ireland.

Zimnavoda and her father, Jack M. Kramer, established RCF in Los Angeles in 1974 and used an SBA guaranteed loan to start manufacturing their metal couplings and high temperature seals and gaskets. In 1994, RCF moved to Georgia, thanks to a second SBA guaranteed loan of \$600,000 through Montgomery County Bank in Vidalia. This loan enabled the company to relocate its equipment and key personnel to Vidalia where the firm was able to hire and train new employees.

Zimnavoda says the use of SBA backed financing, through its 7(a) Loan Program, was a good move. "We had a good experience before so it made sense," she said. "We got good interest rates and the pay-back period is better...the new loan has at least 10-year terms."

After becoming established in Georgia, Zimnavoda and RCF received export consulting from Ray Gibeau, an SBA International Trade Specialist based at the U.S. Export Assistance Center.

Zimnavoda and her company are graduates of "ExportGA," an intensive program by the Georgia Small Business Development Center (SBDC) that helps established small businesses increase international sales. "ExportGA" uses a team of international business consultants to conduct eight monthly working sessions for selected firms. Participants also receive research support from University of Georgia business students; access to international trade representatives around the world; and support from mentor companies that are already active in exporting.

“ExportGA” is offered through the U.S. Export Assistance Center, a one-stop shop for export services that is supported by the U.S. Small Business Administration, other federal agencies, and state agencies that include the SBDC, an SBA resource partner.

RCF’s employment will range from about 30 to 50 workers depending on what contracts are being filled. The company’s metal couplings are lightweight and flexible, and utilize seals made from its proprietary “Rishon” material. RCF is an ISO 9001-2000 registered company and has met the requirements for “AS 9100 Rev A” which is the specific aerospace version of ISO, a set of quality management standards required for many international sales.

Zimnavoda’s husband, Richard, is in charge of the company’s ISO standards and other quality control systems at RCF. Her father is the company’s Chief Engineer.

Some other RCF customers include Boeing and its C-17 aircraft program; Lockheed-Martin and its F16 and F22 military aircraft; and Savannah-based Gulfstream which produces high-end corporate jets.

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The SBA was created in 1953 as an independent agency of the federal government to aid, counsel and protect the interests of small business. For more information on all of SBA’s programs for small businesses, call the SBA Georgia Office at 404/331-0100, or visit the SBA’s extensive Web site at www.sba.gov.